

**BEM**

FIRST NATIONAL MEETING  
STATLER HILTON HOTEL  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SEPTEMBER 27, 1967

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES <sup>MOVE</sup><sub>Λ</sub> FOR VIETNAM PEACE

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B E M

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Address Communications To

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE

Henry E. Niles, Co-Chairman  
901 N. Howard Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Harold Willens, Co-Chairman  
or 800 W. Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90015



BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE  
ORGANIZING CONFERENCE AT  
STATLER HILTON HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D.C.  
SEPTEMBER 27, 1967

HENRY E. NILES, CO-CHAIRMAN  
BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE

Good morning! I am Henry Niles, Co-Chairman from Baltimore.\* Beside me is Harold Willens, Co-Chairman from Los Angeles. Welcome to the kick-off meeting of BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE.

This organization consists exclusively of business executives opposed to the war in Vietnam. We feel that the risks we are running and the price we are paying are out of proportion to any possible gain for the South Vietnamese, for the United States or for the world.

As business executives we must be flexible in meeting conditions which often turn out to be quite different from what we had expected. When our strategy does not work, we change it -- or go bankrupt. Our government's strategy in Vietnam is not working well. We urge that it be changed.

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE urges the President to stop the bombing of North Vietnam, de-escalate the war, negotiate with all parties which are now fighting, bring to an end American military participation, and effect the earliest possible return of American troops. We support the Geneva Agreements of 1954.

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE'S objectives are:

1. To press for practical steps toward ending American participation in the Vietnam War.
2. To use the business community's influence in expanding public support for disengagement.

\* Affiliations are given for identification only. Mr. Niles is Chairman of the Board, Baltimore Life Insurance Company, Baltimore, Maryland. Mr. Willens is President, Factory Equipment and Supply Company, Los Angeles, California.

3. To emphasize the war's adverse effect on our economy.

As soon as those objectives are reached we intend to dis-  
band -- and not before.

An Open Letter to President Johnson protesting the escalation of the war in Vietnam, signed by 305 business executives was published in the New York Times on May 28, 1967. Since then, almost four hundred more executives have signed. Three-quarters of these indicated that they were interested in the formation of a business executives group opposed to the war. BEM is the result.

We need vision to see the desired goals of peace and security and the practical realism to see the obstacles which must be overcome. It's an age in which distances are overcome. An airplane leaving India early in the morning reaches New York before dinner time that night. Or, you can get on a plane in Hongkong early one morning and reach Los Angeles the night before you started.

It's an age in which communication is almost instantaneous and TV carries pictures of the healthy and wealthy to the starving and the downtrodden.

It's an age in which population is growing faster than food production.

It's an age in which nuclear weapons are now in position and ready to be fired to wipe out vast numbers of humans and our Defense Department says there is no sure defense against them.

It's also an age in which science gives us the possibilities of overcoming hunger and want and in which the deeper insight of men of all religions give us the challenge to develop human brotherhood throughout the world, which, in the long run, may be our only defense.

But today our focus is upon Vietnam. We need a change of strategy. Our speakers will emphasize that the idea of total victory is an illusion; that we are not letting our boys down when we work to prevent the Administration from sending them to "do the job that Asian boys should do"; that most of the South Vietnamese want the Americans to go home; and that the war is having an adverse effect upon our economy.

HAROLD WILLENS, CO-CHAIRMAN  
BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE

It has become fashionable to poke fun at Secretary McNamara for his involvement with the Edsel fiasco. The fun-pokers miss the real point.

Once it was clear the highly-paid experts who designed the Edsel had erred (as all humans can), McNamara and his associates faced reality, reversed their course, took the financial loss, then led the company on to better and bigger things. If they had stubbornly refused to believe they could be wrong, the mistake would have been compounded from a loss of money to the death of a great corporation.

Among the top decision-makers responsible for Vietnam policy, McNamara is the only man with a business background, to my knowledge. That probably explains his being the only one with the guts to admit that a policy for which he was partly responsible, hasn't worked. He did exactly that, when recently telling the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee that Hanoi could not be bombed to the negotiating table, even though that objective was a primary reason justifying the decision to bomb North Vietnam.

I do not imply that men from the business world are blessed with superior wisdom or capability. But they have one thing going for them which political and military people seem to lack, and right now it is badly needed to get us out of a dilemma which is tearing our nation apart, and which could result in senseless world conflagration.

What businessmen have going for them, as indicated by Ford's decision to chuck the Edsel and McNamara's candor regarding the foolish dream that we can bomb our way out of the Vietnam morass -- is self-honesty. Businessmen cannot afford the luxury of self-deception, because they are put to the daily competitive test of the market place, or its equivalent. If they kid themselves about the wisdom of a decision, objective reality will quickly jar them out of their self-delusion. The business man who can't say "I may have been wrong," who lacks pragmatic flexibility, either fails to make it or gets dragged out of his office as was (literally) Montgomery Ward's Sewell Avery.

What does all this have to do with Vietnam? Everything, I believe.

The stated objective is negotiated settlement. The policy has been escalation. The bombing of the North began 31 months ago. Here's where we stand today:

1. The North to South troop and material flow (the second objective of the bombing) has not been significantly curtailed.
2. American casualties now exceed those of the South Vietnamese and the gap is growing.
3. In the last eight and one-half months our casualties were greater than those of the past six years combined.

Despite these astonishing facts, political and military leaders blindly clutch at the hope that more of the same will somehow achieve the negotiated settlement we want. Businessmen wouldn't, couldn't do that. Their orientation is such that when one policy has been tried and hasn't done the job, another replaces it. In this case, de-escalation is the obvious alternative. There is much to be said for trying it without having to guarantee success. Even a reasonable chance of success makes more sense than the mindless paralysis of clinging to that which has clearly failed.

As important stockholders in the great American dream, businessmen owe it to themselves and the nation which gives them so much, to speak forth at this critical cross-road in our history. They know, and all Americans know, that the fundamental principles of business decision-making have contributed much to the progress and enrichment of our country. Why, then, should these same useful principles not be made part of the policy decisions relating to the costly and dangerous Vietnam problem?

If business executives become actively involved and make their voices heard, they will be engaging in the highest form of patriotism, as well as admirable self-interest. If, on the other hand they cop out when their fellow citizens most need their leadership, American businessmen will have fully deserved the probably dire consequences of their failure to act when there was still time to do so.

THE HONORABLE THRUSTON B. MORTON  
UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM KENTUCKY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The last three years have witnessed a disastrous decline in the effectiveness of American foreign policy. The root cause of the trouble is the bankruptcy of our position in Vietnam.

The ramifications of the tragic decision to commit United States forces in strength to an Asian ground war are everywhere evident. A crisis of confidence and credibility threatens to undermine the nation's hopes for economic and social progress here at home. Around the world, American principles and programs are suspect, by friend and foe alike.

The Americanization of the conflict in Vietnam has created a kind of myopia that prevents the Administration from effectively coping with major problems elsewhere. The number one priority of United States foreign policy must be to reach an accord with the Soviet Union.

The world's two mightiest powers have no alternative to developing a set of ground rules that will prevent holocaust, and permit peaceful progress, however bitterly competitive. Vietnam stands in the way!

In Europe, a revolution of independence challenges American initiative, but Vietnam stands in the way. In Latin America a revolution of rising populations and rising expectations threatens the future of our own continent. More imagination and energy must be devoted to these areas -- vital to our national interest -- but Vietnam stands in the way.

On the domestic front, apprehension and misunderstanding of our involvement in Southeast Asia are contributing to a dangerous political polarization. Extremists of the left and right are poised to destroy our basic social fabric, while men of reason are reduced to answering "after Vietnam!"

How did we reach this impasse? And where do we go from here?

President Eisenhower warned in his "Farewell Address" of the dangers of too much power and too much influence in the hands of a 'military-industrial complex'. I believe that President Johnson was brainwashed by this power center as early as 1961 when, as Vice President, he ventured to Saigon on a



fact-finding mission. I believe he has been mistakenly committed to a military solution in Vietnam for the past five years -- with only a brief pause during the election campaign of 1964 to brainwash the American people with 'the war in Vietnam ought to be fought by Asian boys.'

If the President of the United States has been mistaken, so have I. In early 1965 when the President began to escalate the war, I supported the increased American military involvement. I was wrong!

While I believed then that we should not telegraph our punches, as the President's program of gradual or phased step-up clearly did, I have grave doubts today that any military action, then or now, would have decisively influenced the conflict.

The basic mistake of the Administration has been its failure to give proper emphasis to the political nature of the war in Vietnam. And the basic but overwhelming reality in Vietnam today is that a political victory may well be out of reach.

I am convinced that further military escalation and an additional United States military commitment will not obtain our objectives of peace in Vietnam. I am convinced that unless we gradually and, if necessary, unilaterally reduce the scope of our military involvement we may well destroy the very society we sought to save.

The President has said the war 'is worth the price.' There is absolutely no indication that the Vietnamese agree. They want peace period!

We face a clear dilemma. Can we accomplish in Vietnam the limited objective we want and, at the same time, provide the Vietnamese with the security they want? The simple brutal truth is: No!

Therefore, we must decide -- without delay -- on a course of political and diplomatic action that offers some hope of settlement. We must make it crystal clear to the American people that there is no military solution in Vietnam. We must put an immediate ceiling on further U. S. military action and open up every possible avenue toward negotiations.

None of our options will be painless, but who would claim that present policies have been without pain.

None of our options will be cheap, but who would claim that present policies have not been costly.

There have been alternatives offered before that have been rejected out of hand as too painful and too dear. But in retrospect, these lost opportunities have looked like bargains once the chances to take advantage of them have passed us by.

I believe it would be a national, and indeed an international, tragedy if the Administration permits any further suggestions for an end to the war to pass by unexamined and unexplored.

With absolutely no claims to expertise or originality, I believe the United States should consider the following:

1. An immediate cessation of all bombing of North Vietnam. I do not share, at this time, the concern of many that missions close to the border of China present a grave risk of intervention. I do not question the effectiveness of the bombing of the North upon the war in the South. I believe that an indefinite bombing halt just might encourage Hanoi to talk, and I believe we must give it a try.

2. An end to all search and destroy missions. The price has not been worth the accomplishments. And the price every-day goes up. Furthermore, the cost in civilian casualties and disruptions only adds to the growing disaffection of the Vietnamese population toward their American 'saviors.'

3. A gradual concentration of effort to secure the coastal and population centers of South Vietnam where a vast majority of the people live. This can and must be accomplished with a substantial reduction in American troop strength. The 'over-presence' of our forces has contributed to a mounting tide of anti-Americanism among the Vietnamese populace.

4. Increased pressure upon the Saigon government to negotiate and to institute widespread reform. The only hope for any form of representative government or any kind of civil order lies basically with the Vietnamese and their leaders -- the present regime and the NLF. We can encourage reform, but we cannot impose a military occupation or a colonial government.

5. An internal and regional settlement. The thrust toward negotiations, toward a cease-fire, and toward a long range solution to the conflict that has torn the entire Indo-

Chinese peninsula asunder for a generation has to be initiated locally. A climate for talks: between South Vietnamese and South Vietnamese, between North and South, between Laos, Cambodia, North and South Vietnam and Thailand, between the free, neutral and Communist nations of Asia, must be developed by Asians themselves. We must do more to encourage them.

I devoutly wish that the United Nations had the will and the wherewithall to accomplish this task, but such is unfortunately not the case. It is apparent that a return to Geneva is probably out of the question. Perhaps there is still hope that a regional or All-Asian peace conference, without outside involvement, could set the stage for meaningful local initiative toward peace and progress.

6. The Administration should precisely state to Hanoi and the world that our unilateral disengagement seeks an appropriate response. Let there be no doubt, in any quarter, that while we will take the first steps down the long and tortuous road toward peace in Vietnam, we pray for an equally peaceful response. Let there be no doubt upon whose shoulders will lie the responsibility for continued chaos and devastation, should our efforts fail.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: What is the Government's latest position on having the Viet Cong in the negotiation?

Senator Morton: I understand from some of my former colleagues in the Department of State that we are willing in a negotiation to have the Viet Cong there. In fact, a negotiation would be meaningless without them because you have two wars: the civil war and the war between the North and South. Our role in a negotiation is not completely clear to me because the primary parties should be the Viet Cong and the South Vietnamese Government in Saigon and the North Vietnamese Government in Hanoi.

Question: From your remarks I feel that if the North Vietnamese do not accept some sort of conditions the results are going to be frightful. Are you in favor of ceasing the bombing indefinitely and sitting down to talk it over without any conditions?

Senator Morton: Our involvement is complex. I personally feel that our western defense perimeter, as outlined by General Eisenhower and the late John Foster Dulles, is an island chain in the Pacific. That doesn't mean we don't have re-

sponsibilities in other parts of the world. Partially with my urging, and I admitted my mistake, we have gotten so heavily involved we can't send an armada over there and then just pull out. That won't bring about negotiations.

Question: Do you stand behind General Gavin's theory?

Senator Morton: I think General Gavin and I are in agreement overall but not necessarily in detail. In his position, the enclaves are mostly along the seacoast. I want to see us quit this hunt and destroy business and try to secure the twenty percent of the area where eighty percent of the people live. This is not necessarily along the seacoast but includes Saigon and so forth.

Question: Would you comment on what effect the war in Vietnam is having on our economy in the U.S.?

Senator Morton: You businessmen know a lot more about this than I do! I don't think it is having too much effect on the economy. I do think it is preventing us from doing things that we have to do in certain areas. I don't know the actual tie-in between Detroit and Newark with Vietnam, but in the minds of the public there is a psychological association.

We are spending two and one-half billion dollars a month in Vietnam and we hear that for a billion dollars a year we might have prevented such a riot.

No war is popular, but this is an unpopular war. In the Korean situation we gave President Truman all kinds of standby powers and he used many of them. We raised excise and income taxes; the people in this country felt that war. Here we have a civil war behind us and a fighting war in front of us. Yet everyone of you are doing fine, making money, doing just about as well as you have ever done. No one feels this war unless he has a loved one there. The families of the half million men over there of course feel this war. I have talked to many who have lost loved ones there and it is a harrowing experience.

In the last three months a change has come over this country; a feeling of frustration about this war. I can only account for it in two ways: (1) There is a psychological association between the troubles we have had in the urban areas and the price we are paying for this war; and (2) Secretary Fowler is on Capitol Hill everyday asking for a 10% tax raise.

Question: What is the temper of Congress on permitting free and open debate and especially on reasserting its prerogatives on foreign policy? You see how quickly the Senate establishment took on Senator Case when he criticized the President's policy in Vietnam.

Senator Morton: There is a lot of free and open debate in the Senate. Clifford Case spoke out with a motive of patriotism and complete sincerity. I don't think the establishment jumping on him should be taken too seriously. You vote with the majority and you are in the establishment, and the next day you vote the other way and you are not in the establishment.

With regard to Congress reasserting its role in the field of foreign affairs, constitutionally what is it? In the House of Representatives until lend-lease came along in the late 1938-39 no one wanted to be on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Now, next to the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees it is the most sought after committee in the House. Appropriations implements much of our foreign policy.

The Senate's role in foreign affairs has been negative. We could turn down a treaty or we could refuse to confirm a Secretary of State or an Ambassador. I suppose the most historical example is when the Senate turned down President Wilson's League of Nations treaty. But today because we are engaged in programs affecting foreign policy that requires funding, the role of the Congress is somewhat changed. Basically, foreign policy is still much up to the President. Many of us disagree with the President on the conduct of the war in Vietnam. When the appropriation bill came up I got letters saying, "Why don't you make your opposition manifest by voting against the 'defense appropriation bill'?" Three members of the Senate did vote against that bill but I can't. We have half a million men in Vietnam. I feel it is not their fault that they are there. Surely I am not going to vote in a demagogic way to reduce or restrict the support of those men. I think this goes for the Congress by and large. In this country you have got to have cooperation between these two great branches of Government, the Administration and Legislative, to get anywhere. The only way you are going to cut expenses is when the two team up together and try to do it.

Question: If the Administration continues to ignore us and go on the same way, what do you envision is likely to happen?



Senator Morton: I think the Administration is going to respond. If not, the American people will speak out through the ballot box.

Question: Howard Tucker recently reported that the Vietnamese, both North and South, are tired of war and want peace regardless of whether they have a Communist or democratic form of government. If the elections were held at this time, Ho Chi Minh would win the election and he is still the national popular leader of the country. General Eisenhower thought Ho Chi Minh would have won in an election of 1956. Tucker said the Viet Cong controls seventy-five percent of the real estate in South Vietnam and also the NLF is composed mainly of the South Vietnamese rather than the North. If Tucker's statements are true, are we not supporting a minority in Vietnam and if so, why must we spend more billions there when we have a minority at home?

Senator Morton: Although I don't know exactly, Mr. Tucker's figures of seventy-five percent, perhaps eighty percent, of the area, are reasonably correct. Even though Ho Chi Minh is a Communist--he is (trained in Moscow), and a dictator--he has his domestic political problems in bringing his people to the negotiating table when bombs are bursting within sight of hundreds of thousands in Hanoi and Haiphong. Do you know that he is considered the George Washington of his country in the minds of many South Vietnamese as well as North Vietnamese? He fought the Japanese in the occupation. He fought the French, and here we are in the same position. The only thing that is saving us from being considered just as colonial as the French is that we have twenty percent Negro troops there.

REAR ADMIRAL ARNOLD E. TRUE, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED  
PROFESSOR OF METEOROLOGY  
SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE  
LA HONDA, CALIFORNIA

Like Senator Morton, I am another of those Kentucky hillbillies. In 1917 they put shoes on me and sent me to the Naval Academy. There I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. I consider that this oath is still binding and that is one of the reasons I am here today.

I would like to speak very briefly about the education of the public of the United States about this Vietnam War, -- in fact, about our foreign policy as a whole, because I think that the Vietnam War is only one part and there are many Vietnams in the world. There are going to be some shortly in South America. There will be others in Southeast Asia and various other parts of the world, including Africa. Unless we get a change in our foreign policy there will be one Vietnam after another. While our immediate aim is to take care of this war, it is also important to direct our foreign policy so as to avoid reinvolvement in a lot of future Vietnams. The public until very recent months has supported this war because it is the habit of the citizens of the United States to support their government, their President, and their Secretary of State under the assumption that they have the facts and they know best.

If one examines the situation closely, one finds a tremendous variation between the slogans and the facts, between what we say and what we do. Alan Payton, writing in the Saturday Review, said that men can create tremendous noble slogans and shout them aloud while at the same time doing ignoble actions; the more ignoble the actions the louder the shouts of the noble slogans. This war has been conducted a great deal on the basis of slogans. A long time ago Thomas Jefferson said the fate of democratic government hangs on the perilous hope that its citizens can and will think for themselves. This group I think is doing so. There are still many citizens who need to be educated and need to be asked to think for themselves on the basis of facts and not slogans.

One of our first slogans is "commitment." We hear again and again that we have a commitment in Vietnam. The Constitution provides that foreign relations shall be conducted by the Executive department of the Government with the advice and consent of the Senate. I can find no record that the

Senate has ever advised or consented to the Vietnam War or to our involvement in it. At the same time I do find a record that the Senate has consented and approved our adherence to the charter of the United Nations but this Vietnam involvement is a violation of that charter.

Another slogan is our commitment to the "free world," that we fight to support the free world against the world in slavery. If you examine some of the free world that we support, you can find that one example is Greece, which seems to be occupied now by a tight military dictatorship. Another example of the free world is Taiwan. I was in Taiwan fairly recently. Every third man is in the secret police for one of the tightest dictatorships that I have ever seen. I doubt if Mao Tse Tung's dictatorship in Red China is any tighter than the dictatorship of Chiang Kai Shek in Taiwan. In Thailand we again talk about the "free world." Thailand is another military dictatorship. So is Haiti. I could go on and on. Please examine these examples of the "free world" that we are supporting. They are perhaps non-Communist. That is about as far as our inquiry into the freedom goes.

Another slogan is that our "national honor" is involved in Vietnam. In an editorial in the Saturday Evening Post, Norman Cousins said the President is indeed right when he says that our national honor is at stake in Vietnam, because things are being done in Vietnam that are dishonorable and inconsistent with the meaning of American history.

Another slogan is that this war is necessary to our national security. Many times I have heard people say we must fight the Communists there or we will fight them here. This is a complete mythology. Can anyone envision Ho Chi Minh bringing his two or three little junks and torpedo boats to attack the coast of the United States? Or even China for that matter? China has no navy, nor an effective air force as yet -- this is not to say what she will have in the future. There is certainly no stake of national security. We hear that if Vietnam falls, according to the domino theory, all of Southeast Asia will fall and then the Philippines and Indonesia, and then Australia and New Zealand. There is absolutely no evidence to back up this assumption. If any Communist nation ever tries to attack Australia or New Zealand, they must do it across water, where the United States Navy and United States Air Force can be completely effective in blocking any move that could be made now or in the conceivable future. I can't say what will happen seventy-five or even fifty years from now. Perhaps then China will have a navy that could cross the ocean and, as Time Magazine says,

turn the Pacific into a Chinese or Red lake. But this is far in the future. I sometimes doubt if the future will extend that far.

Another slogan is the prevention of a bigger war. You don't prevent a bigger war by engaging in a bigger war. The things we are doing now are leading directly into a bigger war. We are dropping bombs on the border of China. While a great many authorities think there is no chance of Chinese intervention I am not so sure. A great many authorities thought that China would not intervene in Korea. Yet China intervened in Korea under circumstances far less favorable than exist now for her intervention in Vietnam. They have already offered -- I believe sincerely -- to send troops to aid North Vietnam. Up to date Ho Chi Minh has turned them down because the Chinese are traditional enemies of the North Vietnamese and Ho Chi Minh does not want the Chinese any more than he wants us there. But before we can gain a military victory, before North Vietnam will fold up, the Chinese will come over. That would be my prediction. They say the reason China won't come is because they are having internal troubles. That is quite true. But as you know dictators have often found that you can help internal troubles and you can unite your people by engaging in a foreign war. Consequently our giving opportunities for Chinese intervention might do the very thing that we don't want, namely to heal all the internal troubles in China and unite the Chinese in a holy war against the United States. If this occurs then our half million troops in South Vietnam will be in real trouble. Now we have more or less a master hand. But suppose that a million Chinese pour across those borders to add their force to those of the Vietnamese, which are not inconsiderable, there is the possibility of a tremendous massacre or a Dunkirk. We couldn't pour in troops from here to resist the three million man Chinese army plus their ten million militiamen. So these are the chances we are taking.

We neglect the fact that Russia's commitments to support North Vietnam are just as strong as our commitments to South Vietnam, if not stronger. Russia is giving support to an increasing extent. Kosygin has just said that as we escalate he will escalate his support. So we are led on and on to this bigger war we are trying to prevent.

Another slogan is the containment of China. When you contain a huge nation of 700 million people you are taking on a pretty good-sized job. We have China contained to a certain extent in that we have bases in Korea, Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Taiwan. To a great extent China is contained

as far as her expansion beyond her borders is concerned. The necessity of this containment might be questioned in that there is not one single combatant Chinese soldier on foreign soil. They do have a few labor troops in North Vietnam assisting in rebuilding bridges and other things that our bombers destroy. The United States, on the other hand, is maintaining somewhere around a million and a half troops on foreign soil. China might possibly think about containing the United States. I haven't seen any evidence of her attempts to do so yet. Once in a while you need to look at the other fellow's point of view.

Another expression that we hear frequently is "leave it to the generals" or "let them run the war." This has a great deal of appeal rather than the President or the Secretary of State or some other civilian saying, "You bomb this or that bridge." So there is some sympathy for the proposal to leave it to the generals. But the generals are not supposed to do anything except to fight the wars they are told to fight. If they are told to win a military victory in Vietnam, you can't blame the generals for trying to do it and for asking for whatever troops or supplies or other equipment they need. If the civilian portion of our government, which is supposed to have control over the military, decides that war is necessary, that it is in the national interest, then it is not appropriate for us to criticize the generals. However, to leave the decision to the generals as to whether and how far we fight the war is, in my opinion, a surrender of the basic principle of our government that the civilian portion of the government has control over the military.

In my part of the country my good friend Ed Keating is running for Congress as a peace candidate. He is being opposed by a young lady whom most of you know as Shirley Temple. Her entire program, as nearly as I have heard it, is, "leave it to the generals"! Everything!

At this point I would like to quote a public statement by the American Friends Service Committee, in 1954, thirteen years ago; "The American Friends Service Committee is profoundly disturbed with the pressures for United States military involvement in Indo-China. On the basis of long Quaker experience in international service, we are convinced that nothing but disaster lies down this road. The destructiveness of modern war can produce nothing but hatred even among those on whose behalf the fighting is ostensibly undertaken, and hatred is no foundation upon which freedom and democracy can be built. We urge our fellow citizens to remember that the real victory for freedom in Indo-China as elsewhere depends on



winning the hearts and minds of the Indo-Chinese. This requires that America first understand the legitimate yearnings of the Asian people for independence and for a better standard of life."

These are the fundamental issues in the present raging Indo-Chinese revolution and they are not issues that can be met by military threats. If one objective is to win hearts and minds, if this is the way to win the war in Indo-China, we lost it two years ago.

Yesterday's paper contained an article which said we had dropped two hundred and forty thousand leaflets on a village in Vietnam stating that we were going to bomb this village again and again, and therefore the inhabitants of this village should defect to the Saigon government. This is a marvelous way to win hearts and minds. But you can possibly understand that while some of them may defect to the Saigon government, as nobody likes to be killed, how much loyalty they are going to give to the Saigon government after they have had their hearts and minds won by the dropping of bombs and napalm on the homes that they have occupied ever since they were born. Sometimes as I listen to the pronouncements of our government I am reminded of Cato the Elder in the Roman Senate who ended every speech with the words "delenda est Carthago," which means "we must win the cold war."

I would like to mention the morale of the South Vietnamese Army, the Saigon Army. All of our military people report that the NLF and the North Vietnamese troops are the best that they have ever encountered. They are willing to fight to the death. Operating with inferior equipment they give our people a very bad time. We also hear that the Saigon Army does not want to fight and they are called all sorts of uncomplimentary names. It doesn't take much inductive reasoning to find out why this is so. The same people are Vietnamese fighting in NLF and in the North Vietnamese army as are fighting in the Saigon army. But the Viet Cong, the NLF, believe that they are fighting for their country. Whether they are Communist or Communist-led or non-Communist or nationalist or something else, here is one group that believes in what they are fighting for. The Saigon Army does not believe in the Saigon government, does not support the Saigon government and consequently the men desert at the rate of a hundred thousand men per year and they avoid combat whenever possible. So we Americans have taken over the war and are fighting in place of the Saigon Army because the Saigon Army does not believe in what it is supposed to be fighting for, which may appear to them as the perpet-

uation of the power of a junta of generals who fought against the Vietnam nation under the French. If the South Vietnamese people believed they were fighting for the freedom of Vietnam, the South Vietnamese Army would be just as good an army as the NLF. Since they outnumber the NLF about three to one they would very shortly establish the Saigon government in complete control of the entire nation. If they don't believe it, then it looks as though we are taking on the responsibility of supporting an unpopular dictatorship for an indefinite period.

There are many solutions and Senator Morton outlined some of them. If one falls into a deep well he doesn't save face by staying there. He gets out as gracefully as he can. I recommend that in Vietnam we get out as gracefully as we can. As to what we can do toward a solution, I think this group is in the process of doing it right now and many of you have been doing it previously. As Norman Cousins says, "It is unpatriotic and un-American to be silent about the unraveling of the American fiber in Vietnam."

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: What does the Admiral think of some intermediate solution where there would still be an American presence in Vietnam instead of immediate withdrawal?

Admiral True: Very probably it will be necessary to maintain some presence in Vietnam. Immediate withdrawal often results in a great deal of bloodshed, turmoil, and commotion. Withdrawal, to be orderly must be gradual, perhaps by first withdrawing into enclaves and later withdrawing completely. It would be good to have some coalition government of the NLF and representatives of the Buddhists and of the liberal elements of the present Saigon regime. I don't think it necessarily needs to include General Ky, in spite of his election landslide. I think that the entire election was a sop to American opinion in the hope that we would be gullible enough to swallow it, as a great many people have.

Question: Would the Admiral give his opinion of the feasibility of a Maginot line type of defense of South Vietnam.

Admiral True: The Maginot line didn't work very well in France nor is it likely to in Vietnam because the people can wander through the jungles. Of course it is proposed to practically remove the jungles. We practically have removed the jungles now by napalming them and defoliating the trees. Still it is easy in the dark to slip across.

They plan to put in detection apparatus but I think the alarm bell will be ringing every ten seconds and the people manning the Maginot line will be darting back and forth and getting shot at as frequently as they are now. The line could be made if we want to put enough into it in time, construction, men and money.

Question: Isn't the objective to involve China in this conflict?

Admiral True: I have feared this and I have no facts and I do not know the answer. It is rumored by many people that there is a contingent of persons in Washington who want to provoke war with China with the thought that we can knock out their nuclear potential now while it is small. It is my belief that this is the wrong approach and the wrong thing to do. While undoubtedly by conventional bombing we could delay the development of nuclear capacity in China, I do not think we can destroy it but we would increase the enmity and the determination of the Chinese eventually to produce the hydrogen bomb with the means of delivery and to go ahead and use it as soon as they got it.

Question: Is it possible that the report of the incident in the Tonkin Gulf was a curious report of something that never happened, since it was a silent attack, done in total darkness and there was no damage to the United States Navy?

Admiral True: I have no direct knowledge of the Tonkin Gulf incident but the report that appeared in the press immediately aroused my suspicion in that the report we made to the United Nations stated that in accordance with naval custom the destroyer Maddox fired a warning shot across the bows of the Vietnamese torpedo boats. This is not in accordance with naval custom. Any shot fired at another man of war is a hostile shot and the other man of war is entitled under the laws of justice, self defense and international law to reply to that shot. Further, the report made to the United Nations stated that these torpedo vessels approached in attack formation. All press news that I could assemble and Professor Bruce Franklin of Stanford University, spent a great deal of time researching the press on this subject, indicates that the Vietnamese torpedo boats were astern of our destroyer. This is not an attack position. The destroyer can make thirty-five knots. The torpedos they have can make forty-five knots. It would take over thirty minutes for a launched torpedo to overtake the destroyer which is free to maneuver. The destroyers were first invented as a reply to torpedo boats, not as victims of torpedo boats and, as an oldtime destroyer skipper, I would worry very little about being attacked by a torpedo boat.

HIS EXCELLENCY TRAN VAN DINH  
FORMER AMBASSADOR FROM SOUTH VIETNAM TO THE UNITED STATES  
DIRECTOR OF THE OVERSEAS VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION  
FREE LANCE WRITER, WASHINGTON, D.C.

From a commitment of 3,164 "advisers" in 1961, the United States, in 1967, with half a million soldiers, a list of casualties nearing the 100,000 mark, is engaged in a full scale, if undeclared, war in Vietnam. The victory or defeat in this war, the success or failure of the huge U. S. involvement which affects every Vietnamese from North to South, depends on the answer to this fundamental question:

"Is the U. S. military presence accepted by the majority of the Vietnamese people? Does it serve their national interests or does it antagonize the Vietnamese society and destroy its fabric?"

By order of importance, prestige and influence, the Vietnamese society was and is classified in the following order: SI, NONG, CONG, THUONG, BINH.

First, the SI, or the community of scholars, intellectuals, religious leaders. The government in Hanoi, the Presidium of the National Liberation Front (NLF, usually called Viet Cong, V.C.) are composed of intellectuals and descendants of well-known Vietnamese scholars, not proletarians.

Second, the NONG: the peasants and the rural community.

Third, the CONG or the workers and the industrialists.

Fourth, the THUONG or the merchants and businessmen.

Fifth and last, the BINH or the military. In the history of Vietnam, old generals faded away as warriors to be remembered only as scholars and administrators.

Let's examine now the two most important classes of the Vietnamese society, the SI and the NONG, the intellectuals and the peasants, and find out how the war and therefore the U. S. military presence, affects them. It is worth mentioning here that all Vietnamese believe, wrongly or rightly, that the U. S. directs and influences every aspect of Vietnamese life and all anti-government manifestations automatically turn into anti-American demonstrations.

1. The SI: This community, especially since after the September 3, 1967, elections, is openly anti-war and anti-American. Mr. Richard Gritchfield, of the Washington Evening Star, wrote from Saigon on September 18, 1967: "The Vietnamese government and the U. S. officials have been shocked by what they say is the growing bitterness, indifference and fence-sitting of the Vietnamese." Mr. Ward Just, of the Washington Post, wrote on January 22, 1967: "The heavy weight of the American presence and 'advisory effort', which has become in fact a parallel government reaching down further into Vietnamese society, is producing a new colonialism different in character but often similar in effect to the French". A respected and well-known Vietnamese journalist, writer, a Ph.D. in western education, Dr. Ton That Thien told Mr. Richard Harwood, correspondent of the Washington Post in Saigon: "If the policies of the U. S. and the government of General Ky had popular support it would be evident to all. The people of this country would raise money and pay taxes to support the war. The young men of the country would do the fighting against the enemy. The peasants in the countryside would not help the Vietcong and would supply the intelligence needed to eliminate them. But we in Vietnam are doing none of those things. You are paying for the war and this regime, not the Vietnamese. You are fighting this war with American troops because the Vietnamese soldiers will not fight. The peasants are helping the Vietcong and they are not giving you the intelligence you want. You are confronted with a society that opposes the present policies in the only way it can -- with passive resistance." (Washington Post, July 16, 1967) Analyzing the surprising success of lawyer Truong Dinh Dzu, the first runner up in the recent Presidential elections, the pro-government Saigon Post mentioned as one of the reasons for Mr. Dzu's success: "The undercurrent of chauvinism which is at the basis of the average Vietnamese man's suspicion of anything foreign." The paper's editorial continued: "Let it be known here that when the French first were interested in Vietnam, they were called by our forefathers 'the devils of the West'. American presence here, however beneficent it may be for this nation in the long range, is viewed with suspicion and sometimes with resentment. Dzu was the only candidate to forget mentioning the necessity of the U. S. presence at the present juncture of this nation." (Saigon Post, September 14, 1967)

As indicated by the Saigon Post, the suspicion of anything foreign is not the monopoly of the intellectuals but it is shared by the average Vietnamese as well. The Vietnamese are not xenophobic when it comes to the fields of



culture and civilization. But as citizens of a small nation with a turbulent history of over 2,000 years, many of them spent in the fighting against foreign invasions -- Chinese, Mongolian, French, Japanese -- the Vietnamese cannot afford to trust a foreigner politically and militarily. This is a blunt truth which is often forgotten. In Asia and in Vietnam, it is nationalism and not communism which motivates man into action. I am sure if the Soviet Union stationed 500,000 Russian troops in North Vietnam, my compatriots North of the 17th parallel would feel the same way, if not stronger, as the Vietnamese feel about the U. S. military presence in the South. I do not mention here Chinese troops instead, as the answer would be obvious to anyone who has an elementary knowledge of the history of Vietnam. The clearsighted and patriotic Americans who warned this country not to embark in a land war in Asia, not to send to the Asian jungles the fine and brave American young men to do the job the Asian boys should do, these Americans not only have the U. S. interests at heart but they also understand the realities of Asia and Vietnam as well.

Added to the escalation of the U. S. military commitment, the two regimes backed by the U. S. and headed by two Catholic Presidents -- President Ngo Dinh Diem from 1954 to 1963 and President-elect General Nguyen Van Thieu today -- have suppressed Buddhism, the majority religion of Vietnam. The May-June 1966 civil war in Hue and Da Nang between the Buddhists and the military junta killed hundreds and left thousands of Buddhists in prison. Not long ago, on July 18, 1967, General Nguyen Van Thieu declared an unnecessary war against the Buddhists by abolishing the 1964 Buddhist Charter in the most arbitrary manner without the advice and consent of the General Assembly of the United Buddhist Church, the only qualified body to effect changes in the Charter. You may be surprised to know that in "free" and "democratic" South Vietnam, the majority religion operates under government-approved charter.

2. The NONG or the community of peasants who represent 80% of the population.

This community suffers the most from the war. Nearly 2 million of them have already become wandering, aimless, hopeless refugees in strange cities and in stranger settlements. They are taken away from their villages, from their pagodas, from the tombs of their ancestors, from their loyal companions: the buffaloes, from the familiar trees, from the quiet rivers, from all that which represent to them life, the cosmos, the universe, their past, their present and their future. Those who remain behind in insecure hamlets are still oppressed,

are still poor and are landless. Despite repeated promises from successive Saigon governments, land reforms have never been carried out. There have been at least four distinct land reforms on paper over the last decade but none of these was implemented. Just an example: While President Ngo Dinh Diem regime expropriated 457,000 hectares (2.47 acres per hectare) or over one million acres and while the French government back in 1958 returned to South Vietnam 246,000 hectares of formerly French-owned land, until last year only 248,000 hectares had been redistributed (AID Report in the Congressional Record of March 10, 1966). Stated in the simplest terms, the land reform problem is the following: The Vietcong tell the peasants that the land they till is theirs and that they will get more after victory, whereas the South Vietnamese governments have been trying to arrange for them to purchase the land from its owners on easy terms. As the result, the peasants, being practical, believe that a South Vietnamese government's victory is not to their advantage. It is only natural then that they do not welcome the government troops in their areas. They suspect that under the soldiers' cover, the absentee landlord will return and seize the land. What they suspect happened only too often. Even General Ky admitted that "the communists were closer to the people's yearnings for social justice and an independent national life than his own government" (James Reston, The New York Times, September 1, 1965). Land reforms, obviously the most important feature in any decent government in South Vietnam, cannot, however, be carried out in a satisfactory manner by governments whose members own lands and are acquiring more and more.

Except in a few privileged cases, the workers, the businessmen, the soldiers below the rank of major and captain do not benefit much from the present situation mainly because of government officials' corruption and inflation. The U. S. commitment is therefore regarded by many Vietnamese as being geared only to a tiny minority of the population, the less respected. The U. S. cannot do much if it wants to change the situation with the present Vietnamese structure unless it takes over the whole country with one million soldiers and hundreds of thousands of civilian administrators.

I do not believe that the war, which has its roots in the political and social conditions in South Vietnam and not in Peking or Moscow, can be won under the present conditions and political and social climate unless by victory one means the total destruction of Vietnam. How can it be won when the increase in the U. S. military commitment provokes an equivalent increase in anti-war and anti-American feelings, an equivalent

ascendency in inflation and corruption and a deeper dislocation of the fabric of the Vietnamese society? The Americanization of the military war (General Thieu himself has asked the U. S. to do more fighting in his Meet the Press interview on September 10, 1967) and the Americanization of the pacification which gradually leads to the colonization of Vietnam, cannot help but aggravate an already critical situation. Nor can the war be won by "bombing North Vietnam back to the stone age" or by building a barrier along the 17th parallel. Some people think that the surest way to win is to invade North Vietnam with one million U. S. troops. But then I am sure, the Chinese will move into the conflict.

It is important to remember that the war started in South Vietnam and is still very much there. At the present moment, at best, one can say that the war has reached a stalemate and there is no light at the end of the tunnel. How one can see the light at the end of the tunnel when one does not know how long the tunnel is? The tunnel in Vietnam may reach as far as Peking and Moscow.

What is then left to be done but to find the way to negotiate for the end of the war. This, I believe, is the often-repeated official position of the U. S.

When it comes to negotiations, one basic question poses itself: "Who is to negotiate with whom?"

I believe negotiations can take place between Hanoi and Washington if and when the U. S. unconditionally stops the bombing of North Vietnam. At the present time, I do not think the U. S. is willing to do so. But even if Hanoi and Washington come to the conference table, because the problem is in the South as I said earlier, nothing meaningful could be accomplished unless negotiations can be arranged among the principal belligerents in the South. They are the NLF (Vietcong) and the non-NLF. Who truly represent the non-NLF population? Certainly not the present military junta which has been recently legitimized through an election. Even those who believe (and I do not) that the September 3rd, 1967, elections were reasonably "free" and "fair" have to admit that the Thieu-Ky ticket represents only one-third of the non-NLF population. The election which excludes the most popular candidates, General Duong Van Minh (Big Minh) and Dr. Au Truong Thanh, former Economic Minister, who a few days ago was brutally harassed by the Saigon police. An election which bans from the race candidates from the Buddhists and the labor-unions cannot be considered a valid one. As for the irregularities during the voting, these

are too long for me to enumerate all details here. I would like simply to quote Mr. Vu Tien Huan, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and Chairman of the Central Elections Committee. Mr. Huan, a respected jurist said on September 13 in Saigon that "the results recorded in the minutes (of the government) often completely differ from the figures sent to Saigon through the Post Office" (Saigon Post, September 14, 1967).

Since 1964, the Buddhists and the liberal Catholics in South Vietnam have proposed the formation of an interim civilian government composed of representatives of religious and political groupings. Such a government would organize the election of a government representative enough to negotiate with the NLF for the ending of hostilities, with Hanoi for the withdrawal of North Vietnam troops and with Washington for the withdrawal of the U. S. troops. The withdrawal of U. S. and North Vietnam troops would be effected under the control and supervision of the International Control Commission in the true spirit of the 1954 Geneva Agreements. Mr. Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the NLF, stated on August 28, 1967, that the "NLF will extend its cooperation even to those having participated in the Ngo Dinh Diem administration with the exception of General Thieu and General Ky."

The "elections" September 3rd, 1967, have brought back to power the same military caste. The Buddhists and the liberal Catholics, the students and the nationalist Vietnamese will continue to struggle for the implementation of the proposal for an interim civilian government. In the meantime, and in order to create a better political climate, I would suggest the following steps:

1. A de-escalation of the bombing of both North and South Vietnam and a limitation in the "search and destroy" military operations conducted by the U. S. troops.

2. A solemn affirmation of the U. S. intentions in South Vietnam through a treaty between South Vietnam and the U. S. fixing the number of U. S. troops, their status and the status of the U. S. bases. This treaty, which should be ratified by both the U. S. and South Vietnam Congresses, is, however, temporary. It will terminate itself with the future agreements for the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam reached among all parties concerned.

I am afraid, with time, these proposals and suggestions which may sound radical now to some may become obsolete tomorrow. Perhaps there is a great deal of wisdom in the state-

ment on the U. S. Senate floor on October 19, 1966, by Senator George D. Aiken, of Vermont, to the effect that the President of the U. S. unilaterally declare that the U. S. has achieved a military victory, and that this unilateral declaration would herald the resumption of political warfare as the dominant theme in Vietnam.

After all, to many, the war in Vietnam has become a state of mind, an obsession. To me, the war taking place in my homeland is in every respect a tragedy of great magnitude. In all tragedies, there are no villains, there are only victims. And this is no time for accusations, for recriminations, anger and frustration. This is the time for sober thoughts and quick actions, before it is too late.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: In 1954 according to the Geneva Agreements it was expected that all of Vietnam would be united under one Government. How do you feel that the suggestion you are now making would meet with the approval of Ho Chi Minh? It was also my understanding that the NLF felt that Ho Chi Minh had let them down.

Mr. Dinh: On the 28th of August the president of the NLF proposed the cooperation of all people except General Thieu and General Ky. If what you imply is true, that the Viet Cong would be afraid Hanoi would sell them out, that is one reason more why the United States should make an attempt at negotiation with elements in the South.

Many people think the VC are faceless, not a real organization but directed from Hanoi and if someone there pushed a button they would go away. That argument is wrong because it negates the whole history of the Vietnamese nation. The South is new territory, settled in the eighteenth century. Therefore the people there have an emotional problem of unification because they are very much afraid the North will trick them into a situation. The reason why the South Vietnamese Government is so unpopular is because it is dominated by Northerners. The NLF has the real make-up of the society of the South. There is no such complete unity between Hanoi and the Front. There is unity in ambition but not in politics.

Question: How may a free and fair election be achieved in South Vietnam?

Mr. Dinh: We are not going to invite the President of the

United States to send people to supervise! Why should we ask foreigners? For the election to be free and fair requires: (1) that the people are willing to vote. We should not put pressure on them. This can occur because an interim Government does not control the future, therefore the voter does not feel he must be loyal to the government in power in order to keep his job. The interim government therefore provides a condition which does not force people to vote. (2) We should not exclude the people who are neutralist or Communist but the Communist Party should register as such. If it does not do so the election of Communist candidates would be invalid when discovered.

Question: In view of the large number of votes against Ky, what is the problem of uniting the anti-Ky groups?

Mr. Dinh: The questioner does not understand the situation in Vietnam, which is like a glass of water from the pond -- if you keep stirring it you see much dirt. But if you let the glass stand the dirt falls and the water looks clear. The Vietnamese society has been stirred for 25 years. All the division is like dirt in the water. The only force which can combine the political forces is the Buddhist force. Furthermore, there is a cynicism among political people. They don't believe the elections will be free and fair.

Question: If the United States presence is withdrawn, why won't Communist China come in to fill the vacuum?

Mr. Dinh: When the Chinese have been trying to come in for three thousand years I see no reason why they would succeed now. The Vietnamese continue to oppose the Chinese politically and militarily. But do not make the mistake of thinking that the Vietnamese are anti-Chinese, period. The Vietnamese do not hate the political and military Chinese as much as they hate the Japanese or the French, but the Vietnamese oppose any foreign political and military domination. The Chinese have a long history of such domination. Culturally we have a lot of admiration for the Chinese and culturally may even be pro-Chinese.

THE HONORABLE MARRINER S. ECCLES  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, FIRST SECURITY CORPORATION  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH  
FORMERLY CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Kosygin visit to this country has given us all cause to seriously think about the Soviet Union, our relationship to it, and the relationship of both of us to the greater and more compelling world problems. Upon the solution of these problems hangs the survival of both the United States and Russia, and perhaps the world. As Senator Fulbright so aptly stated: "America is showing signs of that arrogance of power which has afflicted, weakened, and in some cases destroyed great nations in the past." Never before has there been such valid reason for the fears that beset us. Never before has there been reason to feel that the human race was speeding along the road to possible oblivion.

The most important issue before the country today is our involvement in Vietnam. It affects every facet of our lives and our relationship to the rest of the world. Are the sacrifices imposed justified by the stakes of war? What are the reasons and justification, if any, for our involvement in Vietnam?

For the past twenty years our government has believed that communism intends to conquer the world -- by force, if persuasion does not succeed -- and that it is the duty of the United States to save the world from that fate. The American picture of aggressive communism is unreal.

The President believes that aggressive monolithic groups are making war in South Vietnam. Under the Truman Doctrine of Containment, communism has continued to spread. It has advanced through revolutions rather than by military aggression. But while communism has been advancing, the power of Russia over the communist world has been waning. It is evident that communism is not a monolithic world power. Russia has its differences with the Yugoslavs. The Chinese and Russians have conflicts of national interest which override communism. The threat of a united communist world does not exist. National rivalries divide the communist states as well as democracies.

It is apparent that communist countries are as intensely nationalist as others. They crave independence and resent interference. They will fight against domination -- from whatever source: either capitalist or other communist country.



The Administration believes that the war in Vietnam is being made solely by communist intervention from without. This does not explain the tenacity of the Viet Cong. They are not Russians, Chinese or North Vietnamese communists; they are South Vietnamese. They are fighting for national liberation and unity of South Vietnam: the causes for which others, including Americans, have fought.

We see every rebellion as the result of a deep plot out of Moscow or Peking, when it usually is the result of crushing poverty, hunger and intolerable living conditions. The aim of revolution, no matter what ideology, is to achieve the values of self-determination, economic security, racial equality and freedom. Let us not forget that while our road was not via communism, we did, as a nation, emerge from revolution.

We might as well face it: there may be more communist countries in the world. But we need not panic at this. Communist nations vary widely; each has a different version of communist theory to fit its own problems. The more of these countries there are, the greater their diversity.

Communism is only part of a broad movement: the rising of desperate people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We crush insurrection in one place, only to find a revolution -- whether communist, socialist or nationalist -- springing up somewhere else. With military bases around the world and ships in every ocean, a revolution takes place in Cuba, 90 miles off our shore.

How can we reconcile what we are doing to the South Vietnamese under the guise of saving them from communism? We have destroyed vast areas of their country. We have killed, wounded or burned more than one million children, as well as countless parents, brothers, husbands and sons. The family has been smashed. We can only guess at the terrible long-range social effects that will result from our actions. No wonder the great majority of the people do not consider us their savior, but hate us and want us to get out of their country.

Despite this, the United States military has increasingly taken over the war. In 1965 one American was killed for eight South Vietnamese; in 1966, one for two; and to date in 1967, one for one. U. S. casualties through 1966 were over 8,000 killed and almost 38,000 wounded. Projected for 1967 alone, based on actual figures for the first six months: 11,190 killed; 64,264 wounded, making a projected total to the end of this year of 19,344 killed and 102,002 wounded. We have lost 832 planes as well as hundreds of helicopters.

Based on the following reports by McNamara it is apparent we are making little progress after three years of fighting and cannot win a decisive victory:

In 1964 - "McNamara told Congress that the U.S. hopes to withdraw most of its troops from Vietnam before the end of 1965."

In 1965 - He said, "It will be a long war."

In October, 1966 - He said, "I see no reason to expect any significant increase in the level of the tempo of operations in South Vietnam."

Communist strength in South Vietnam has increased from 120,000 in January, 1965, to an estimated 298,000 at present. However, North Vietnam has committed only one-fifth of their regular army. Based on the estimate that guerillas must be outnumbered four to one, the communists have more than matched the American buildup to 476,000 now. It is no wonder that General Westmoreland claims he needs five additional U. S. divisions: more than 200,000 men.

Tuesday the press reported General Van Thieu said: "We have not enough Allied soldiers which we need to win the war. We need a big amount of troops to be everywhere, to do many jobs at the same time." At this time the President might reconsider his September, 1964, statement: "We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to get involved... and get tied down in a land war in Asia."

During the past two years Russia has added to the enemy arsenal in South Vietnam rockets, artillery, heavy mortars, automatic infantry weapons and flame throwers, while in North Vietnam she has supplied planes and anti-aircraft guns. She is reported to be supplying 75% of all military supplies and has said she will continue to furnish all military aid necessary. The Chinese are furnishing part of the small arms, clothing and food, and have said they will assist North Vietnam with troops whenever requested to do so. Both countries have indicated they would enter the war, if necessary, to keep the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong from being defeated. It is quite apparent that neither Russia or China are willing for the United States to achieve a victory over the communists and to establish a powerful military base on the mainland of Asia.

If Russia were conducting daily bombing raids against an American ally, as we are doing against a Russian ally, it is inconceivable that we would limit ourselves to providing only military equipment, as they are doing.

What is the effect of our Vietnam policy on the nation? It is responsible for the most serious economic, financial and political problems in this country. It is causing the huge federal deficit which, without a tax increase, could run to more than \$25 billion. In order to curb the resulting inflationary pressures the government has proposed a 10% surtax on individuals and corporations which, if enacted, would reduce the deficit, on an annual basis, between \$9 and \$10 billion.

This war is directly causing a substantial increase in the deficiency in our international balance of payments, which is already serious, as we are by far the world's largest short-term debtor, now owing nearly \$26 billion. It is reducing our free gold to meet these obligations to less than \$2 billion.

It is creating inflationary pressures in nearly every field -- increased costs of living, going up at about 3% per year -- a great shortage of skilled workers -- increasing strikes and exorbitant demands by union labor -- and higher interest rates, in all categories, due to the heavy demand for credit.

The costs of war do not end with the cessation of hostilities. Excluding the Vietnam War, at the end of 1965 we had approximately 20,600,000 veterans. Total veterans' benefits paid to the end of 1965 were \$134 billion; by the end of this year it is estimated they will be \$147 billion. In 1966 we were spending in excess of \$6 billion per year for veterans' benefits, and the Korean War alone is costing more than \$700 million a year. The annual operating expense of the Veterans' Administration hospitals has now passed the billion mark. In addition, during 1965 the land and construction costs of medical facilities was \$1,418,000. Veterans costs will grow rapidly as long as the war lasts, and will continue for decades. The ultimate astronomical expense is difficult to conceive. In the financial sense, a war is never over.

The real tragedy is not financial, it is the useless suffering of the millions of our people whose sons, husbands and brothers are drawn into this useless conflict unwillingly and are killed and maimed for life -- not in defense of their country -- but because of our incompetent and ill-advised leadership.

Our foreign aid since World War II has been \$128 billion -- \$91 billion in economic aid and \$37 billion in military aid -- with dubious results in many instances. The United States is pledged to defend 43 countries under specific treaties and agreements. In addition, a commitment to stop aggression covers all the countries in the Middle East, and any country where the U. S. has a military base is promised support.

While we've been spending tens of billions abroad, our cities are exploding in violent protest as a result of our injustice, and neglect, and failure to meet unfulfilled promises of the "Great Society". Our total estimated Vietnam and foreign aid budget this year is \$30 billion; whereas, the Great Society budget is approximately 40% of that amount -- \$12.5 billion -- which is half of what we spend in Vietnam alone.

Senator Percy says: "If we continue to spend \$66 million a day trying to save the 16 million people of South Vietnam while leaving the plight of 20 million urban poor in our own country unresolved -- then I think we have our priorities terribly confused."

Public and Congressional reaction relative to our worldwide involvement, especially in Vietnam, is forcing the Administration to reconsider its role as world policeman.

The horrible Vietnam debacle, tragic as it is, may yet be a blessing in disguise if it forces us to recognize our staggering failures at home. Runaway crime, delinquency, the riots in our cities, loss of respect for law and order, and the rebellion of frustrated youth -- all spring in part from this. No wonder Russia had this to say about the U. S. : "Only in mockery can the word 'free' be applied to a society which cannot provide tolerable living conditions and democratic rights to a considerable part of its population."

It is tragic that the most powerful country in the world, with 6% of its population and producing 40% of its wealth, should have lost the respect of most of the world. The world, with few exceptions, would like us to leave Vietnam. The continued confidence and good relation with Japan, our greatest asset in Asia, is dependent upon our getting out of Vietnam. The same is true with all the Western European governments and our friends in Latin America. We cannot survive, no matter how powerful we are, in a world without friends.

With these disastrous effects on the nation to continue our ruthless pursuit in Vietnam is madness. To withdraw is

sanity. The consequences of withdrawing cannot possibly be as disastrous for this nation as pursuing our present course. The greatest service we could render the Vietnamese is to withdraw from their country, leaving them to negotiate a conclusion to the war, which is their right.

There is something intrinsically wrong with the idea that the United States should participate in negotiations to decide the future of Vietnam. We are an outside power, which is true also of China and the Soviet Union. To have the future of Vietnam decided by outside powers is a violation of self-determination. Whatever negotiations go on should be among the Vietnamese themselves -- each group negotiating from its own position of strength, uninfluenced by outside powers.

If the U. S. insists on negotiating, it should be with Russia and China, as the sinews of war are being furnished by these countries, without which the war would collapse. In any case, the United States cannot negotiate strength for any future segment of government in South Vietnam. The presence of the United States can only distort the true balance of forces, and only a settlement which represents this balance can bring about a stable government.

No one seems to be able to show in what way a communist Vietnam would be bad. Under Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam would be quite as likely to enforce its independence as has Tito in Yugoslavia, Rumania, and other Russian satellites. Ho Chi Minh is unquestionably the choice of the Vietnamese people, both North and South. Both President Kennedy and Eisenhower have stated that had the election called for under the Geneva Treaty been held in 1956, Ho Chi Minh was so popular he would have won by a large majority. While Ho Chi Minh is a communist, he is not Russian, he is not Chinese, he is Vietnamese -- and Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese communism may differ widely. It is even possible that our best interests would be served by having Ho Chi Minh's communist regime as a buffer against the Chinese communists.

History does not show that a nation that liquidates a bad venture suffers from loss of prestige. Proud, powerful England surrendered to the thirteen American colonies and did not suffer for it. More recently, France moved out voluntarily from Algeria and Indo-China. Today she has more world prestige than ever before. Russia pulled her missiles out of Cuba; her prestige has not suffered.

Hans Morgenthau has written: "Is it really a boon to the

prestige of the most powerful nation on earth to be bogged down in a war which it is neither able to win nor can afford to lose? This is the real issue which is presented by the argument of prestige." We should be less interested in saving face and more interested in saving lives. It is possibly not easy for a proud nation to admit it has blundered, but throughout history great men and nations have gained stature by so doing.

Getting out of Vietnam will enable us to re-establish a friendly relationship with Russia and thereby bring about a balance of power in the world, which would tend to deter any aggressive policy on the part of China. So long as we are in Vietnam, Russia and China consider us their enemy. Kosygin made this crystal clear in his statement before the United Nations and in his conference with Johnson at Glassboro.

We should also recognize China diplomatically and open our doors to trade and travel and help bring her into the United Nations. We should no longer ignore one-fourth of the world's population as though it did not exist.

In conclusion: What can we expect from the stricken Vietnamese nation but hatred, deep and abiding? Their farms and villages have been laid waste, their families scattered to the winds. Their husbands and sons are dead, maimed or missing. And children, orphaned and grotesquely burned, have been seen running through the rubble in packs.

We can never blot out the deed which stands as a testimony of man's inhumanity to man. Nor can we really make amends for the enormity of our crime against these people, who know us not, but whom we have chosen to save from communism.

But we can try. We can make a beginning. And, in conscience, how can that beginning be less than immediate withdrawal of our evil presence, because that is what it has proved to be in the lives of the Vietnamese. And we can humbly, with vigor, and never ceasing, do everything in the power of a rich and repentant nation to heal, and rebuild, and reassure.

The Vietnamese will never forget us, and it is to be hoped that we will never forget the Vietnamese. Because it is this Vietnam tragedy which has shown us ourselves as others see us: a nation to be feared instead of loved, flushed with pride and sure of omnipotence. An arrogant nation, not qualified to handle power wisely.

While the hour is late, it is not yet impossible to turn

the page. Men and nations have made new beginnings before. And out of defeat, there has often come victory -- and what a victory it could be for this nation, so bountifully endowed -- to reverse its image, make itself loved and admired and revered, so that it could stand forth before the emerging peoples around the globe, as an example of what they might wish to become.

But the road is long -- and we must win much forgiveness. So let us begin.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: In the light of the President's 1964 platform in which he stated that we should not get involved in the Vietnam War, what do you think is the motivation behind his changing that opinion?

Mr. Eccles: I would like to find out myself. After many years in the House, as leader in the Senate and as President for the balance of President Kennedy's term, he is reputed to be possibly the smartest, most knowledgeable politician we have ever had. It appears that based on the present poll with reference to Vietnam, we will have to put him in another category. I am sure that he has been greatly influenced by the military and by the State Department. Mr. Rusk was Assistant Secretary there during Mr. Acheson's time and Mr. Dulles came right along after that, and of course the concept in those days was to quarantine Communism. Those views have been carried over into the present time and have heavily influenced the President. He didn't realize, and I doubt if the military did, the problem they were undertaking. I am sure that they never imagined that they were going to be bogged down in the situation that now exists in Vietnam. It would be my view that if they had it to do over we would not be in the situation we are now in.

Question: Because of our highly developed and complex economy are we not more vulnerable than China or the U.S.S.R.?

Mr. Eccles: We certainly are more vulnerable than Russia and much more vulnerable than China. I understand that about sixty-five percent of our population lives in what we call "spread" cities along the seacoast. Russia has few large cities in relation to its population and China has fewer in relation to its population than Russia has. So if we are speaking of an atomic war we are much more vulnerable. However, I think an atomic war would destroy civilization. I don't think there is not any chance of some people surviving but our system, our government, our society, our productive facilities, our type of governments



could not survive an atomic war at all.

I think one of the possible reasons we have been a little cautious about Haiphong is because we know the Russians have a very powerful Navy in the Pacific. That is where most of their power is and I understand they have more submarines than we have. They have specialized in submarines. They have many atomic submarines and we would have a hard time if we should sink Russian ships. We have not declared war. There is a freedom of seas and Russia has a perfect freedom as every other country does to come into Haiphong. If we were to blockade Haiphong without declaring war and sink vessels we would really be at war with the world.

Question: Would you give a short message that economists and businessmen could use to disabuse people of the idea that war contracts give prosperity and help to raise our economic level.

Mr. Eccles: To admit that we have to fight a war killing tens of thousands of Vietnamese as well as our own boys in order to have prosperity in our country is to me an admission of the greatest incompetency and gives us no justification for what we brag about as our great democratic capitalist society. The needs within our own country -- the urban renewal of our cities, our schools, dealing with our crime problems -- can take tens of billions of dollars. We have many friends in the world in the Latin American countries and elsewhere. To these we could divert our productive facilities and our manpower for the purpose of aid instead of aggression.

LETTER FROM BRIGADIER GENERAL SAMUEL D. GRIFFITH, II  
U.S. MARINE CORPS, RETIRED

September 25, 1967  
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Niles,

I regret that my scheduled trip to the Far East makes it impossible for me to attend the Washington Meeting of BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE.

I heartily endorse the objectives of your organization so clearly set forth in your Open Letter to the President printed in the New York Times on May 28, 1967.

Mr. Chairman, our country is indeed troubled. American casualties in the Vietnam War are increasing at an alarming rate. In one three-day period last week more than 400 U.S. Marines were killed or wounded at Con Thien, a position on the border of the so-called demilitarized zone in Vietnam. There the Viet Cong used artillery, heavy mortars, and rockets. This bombardment was no isolated incident but the scale of it is a grim portent of the future. It is high time for the American people to ask bluntly, "For what purpose are Americans still being killed and maimed in Vietnam?" We, of course, know the official answers to this question. We have heard them countless times but the situation today requires something more than the tired clichés of the Secretary of State.

What is imperatively demanded is a positive policy designed to end the fighting in Vietnam so that those unhappy people who have not known peace for two decades may once again enjoy it and so that we may stop expending lives, blood, energy, and resources in an area which is not of critical importance either to our national security or to our strategic position in the Far East.

Despite optimistic statements to the contrary, the end of the Vietnam War is not yet in sight. Indeed, the chances for a peaceful settlement grow daily more remote as the Administration stubbornly persists in its desperate determination to force Ho Chi Minh to negotiate. Let us ask whether further Americanization of the war and its progressive escalation toward a confrontation with China is the way to persuade Hanoi to talk peace. This is, however, precisely the policy which the Administration pursues. It is, in my opinion,

as I believe it is in yours, a disastrous policy.

If we really want negotiation, we must begin to de-escalate the war rather than continue to escalate. The obvious action we can take, and I believe should take and at once, is to cease bombing Hanoi. Even were we to obliterate North Vietnam completely, the guerrilla war in the South would continue.

Our bombing of the North does not and cannot, as Mr. McNamara has testified, stop the flow of the relatively small tonnage required to sustain guerrilla war in South Vietnam.

Why is it not possible for America, the most powerful nation in the world, to take a first step toward what practically everybody in the world except Mao Tse Tung wants?

If a strategy proves unproductive, it is the first responsibility of a commander to change it. But how long are we going to have to wait?

How long would a business man wait to change a manifestly wrong policy? Not long, or he would soon be out of business. I am not suggesting that our country is going out of business, but it is now beginning to be hurt both in body and in spirit. And, who stands to reap the benefits of our misguided strategy? None other than Moscow and Peking.

Surely respect for our President both at home and abroad would not diminish should he take a first positive step which, hopefully, could lead us eventually out of this costly morass into which we daily sink deeper and deeper.

Finally, Sir, I want to congratulate you, Mr. Willens, and your Executive Committee for organizing "Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace" and again to express my regret that I cannot be with you.

Sincerely,

Brigadier-General Samuel D. Griffith II  
U.S. Marine Corps, Retired

Note: This message was read over long-distance telephone by General Griffith to Mr. Niles and recorded by his secretary on September 25, 1967. Permission was given by General Griffith to release it publicly.

#### DATA ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

His Excellency TRAN VAN DINH was active in his student days in the Vietnamese nationalist cause. Later he fought against the French as a senior officer in the Liberation Army of Vietnam. From 1954 until 1964 he was in the Foreign Service of Vietnam and served in Asia, later America and Africa. His last post was Charge d'Affaires and Acting Ambassador of South Vietnam in the United States. He resigned and became a journalist and lecturer and Director for the United States and Canada of the Overseas Vietnamese Buddhist Association.

The Honorable MARRINER S. ECCLES, a financier and business executive with wide interest and experience in business and government. He is chairman of the First Security Corporation of Salt Lake City, Utah and of the Utah Construction and Mining Company of San Francisco. He was chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System from 1936 to 1948 and a member of the Commission on Money and Credit from 1958 to 1961. He is a trustee of the American Assembly of Columbia University and a member of the National Committee on United States-China Relations.

Brigadier General SAMUEL D. GRIFFITH, II, United States Marine Corps, Retired, served in the Far East. He speaks Chinese, has studied the writings of Mao Tse Tung and translated into English Mao's book on guerrilla warfare. He was wounded in action. He is now on the staff of the Stanford Research Institution, Stanford, California.

The Honorable THRUSTON B. MORTON, United States Senator from Kentucky, was a business executive before entering government service and political life. In World War II he commanded three warships. In 1953 he was appointed Assistant Secretary of State. In 1956 he was elected to the Senate. He has been chairman of the Republican National Committee and of the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee. He was permanent chairman of the 1964 Republican National Convention.

Rear Admiral ARNOLD E. TRUE, United States Navy, Retired, has served in the United States Asiatic Fleet in the Far East, commanded the USS Hammann and two Destroyers in World War II and was on the Staff of the Commander-In-Chief of the United States Atlantic Fleet between 1944 and 1946. He has received many decorations. During the Battle of Midway he sustained injuries which necessitated his retirement in 1946. Since then, he has been Professor of Meteorology at San Jose State College.

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES MOVE FOR VIETNAM PEACE

Henry E. Niles, Co-chmn.  
901 N. Howard Street  
Baltimore, Md. 21201

Harold Willens, Co-chmn.  
800 W. Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90015